

Identification Notes for wildlife law enforcement

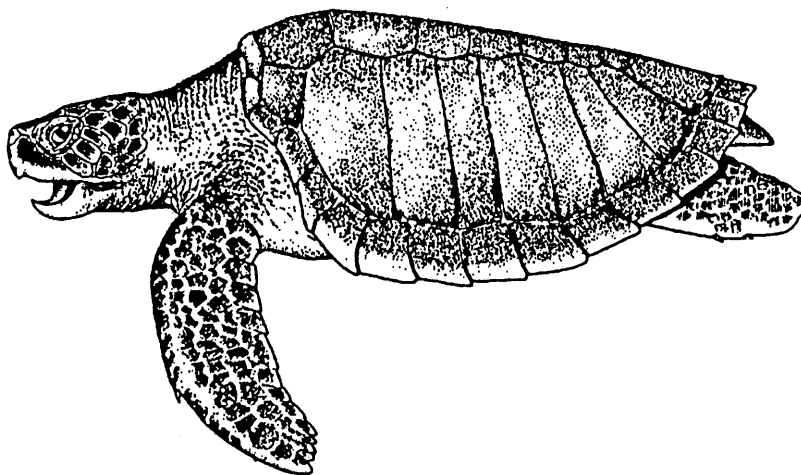
CATEGORY: REPTILE

Scientific Name/s: *Lepidochelys olivacea*

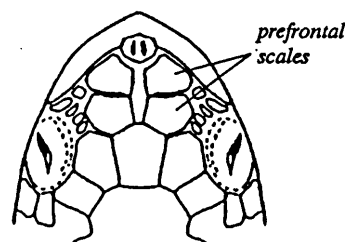
Common Name/s: Olive **Ridley** (Sea) Turtle

PROBLEM: Verification of identification to species level of whole sea turtles is often required. This Quick Take, a supplement to Quick Take R-91-2, provides additional diagnostic information.

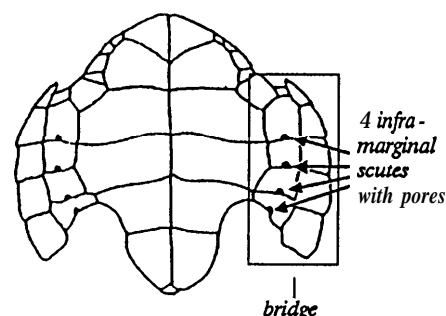
Lepidochelys olivacea (from CITES, 1984)



Dorsal View of Head



Plastron



DIAGNOSTIC FEATURES:

Carapace (viewed from above) nearly round, upturned on the lateral margins and flat on top; width **90%** of length. **Carapacial scutes** include 5 pairs of **pleurals**.

Plastron bridge with four **inframarginal scutes**; openings for Rathke's glands present as pores on rear of each.

Head narrow, almost triangular, length averaging **22.4%** of straight carapace length. Two pairs of prefrontal scales.

Front Flippers with one or two visible claws on the anterior margin; sometimes a small claw present on the distal portion. Rear flippers with two claws.

Color: Adult carapace plain **olive-grey**, **plastron** creamy or whitish with pale grey margins.

REFERENCES:

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